

# Marketing & Outreach – Communicate Impacts

## Description

Communicating the successes and lessons learned from marketing and outreach activities to other program staff and externally to contractors, program partners, and stakeholders can help show the value of your and your stakeholders' work and provide an opportunity for them to provide feedback.

Once you collect the results of metrics identified in your [marketing and outreach evaluation plan](#) and [assess marketing and outreach efforts](#), take time to communicate key findings of those results to program staff, as well as marketing partners, contractors, and stakeholders. Remember to link the program's marketing and outreach impacts to marketing and outreach [objectives](#) to make sure your efforts are achieving what you set out to accomplish. The [Data and Evaluation Communicate Impacts](#) handbook provides insights into how to interpret and communicate evaluation results.

Your program's overall results will be developed and shared at the [programmatic level](#). As part of this programmatic strategy for communicating results, your program team will identify:

- Roles and responsibilities for program staff and partners
- External audiences for communicating program impacts
- Channels and products for communication.

This handbook focuses on steps to communicate the impacts of your marketing and outreach activities as part of your program's overall information sharing efforts:

- Collect marketing and outreach successes and lessons learned as you go
- Share marketing and outreach impacts internally and with partners.

### Share Marketing and Outreach Impacts and Experiences with Peers

The [Better Buildings Residential Network](#) provides an opportunity for residential energy efficiency programs to share their lessons learned and learn from other programs.

### Lend Your Expertise to Communicate Program Impacts

Your marketing and outreach staff expertise may be needed to communicate the impacts of your overall program, not just marketing and outreach efforts. Be prepared to provide your expertise at the [program level](#) if or when you are needed.

### Marketing & Outreach

#### Stages:

##### [Overview](#)

1. [Assess the Market](#)
2. [Set Goals & Objectives](#)
3. [Identify Partners](#)
4. [Make Design Decisions](#)
5. [Develop Implementation Plans](#)
6. [Develop Evaluation Plans](#)
7. [Develop Resources](#)
8. [Deliver Program](#)
9. [Assess & Improve Processes](#)
10. **Communicate Impacts**

Find related information across other program components:

- **Market Position & Business Model – Communicate Impacts**  
*Publicize benefits and lessons learned resulting from your organization's success in the market.*
- **Program Design & Customer Experience – Communicate Impacts**  
*Develop a strategy for communicating program impacts and benefits to key audiences to create and sustain support and engagement.*
- **Evaluation & Data Collection – Communicate Impacts**  
*Communicate pertinent results of evaluations to program staff, partners, and stakeholders.*
- **Financing – Communicate Impacts**  
*Communicate the results of your financing activities to internal and external partners.*
- **Contractor Engagement & Workforce Development – Communicate Impacts**  
*Communicate program results to contractor partners and workforce development stakeholders.*

## Step-by-Step

After [assessing your marketing efforts](#), you can compile and communicate which marketing and outreach approaches performed best and how they achieved results.

Communicate your program's marketing and outreach impacts to staff, partners, contractors, and other stakeholders include the following two steps.

## Collect marketing and outreach successes and lessons learned as you go

Gathering qualitative and quantitative information on marketing and outreach efforts as you implement these activities will help you present relevant impacts in a useful way. By [evaluating your marketing and outreach efforts](#) and working to [assess and improve processes](#), you have the opportunity to understand what marketing and outreach approaches have or have not worked. Communicating the successes and lessons learned from your program's marketing and outreach activities to other program staff and externally to contractors, partners, and stakeholders can help demonstrate the value of their efforts and provide an opportunity for them to give feedback.

To determine which successes and lessons learned to highlight, look at [information captured by your program](#), such as data trends that demonstrate the impact of seasonal marketing campaigns, spikes in demand following outreach events, and annual evaluation results, as well as any marketing survey results and data collected through your [marketing and outreach evaluation](#).

Marketing and outreach successes might include:

- A successful marketing campaign aimed at reducing drafts during the cold winter seasons that was picked up by the news media and generated a significant number of call center inquiries
- A highly targeted direct mail campaign that generated a significant number of calls or resulted in a high uptake rate
- A spike in demand following successful house parties or other outreach events.

Marketing and outreach lessons learned might include:

- Yard signs were more effective at getting homeowners to sign up for a home energy assessment than fliers that were distributed at community events
- Members of the community that are early adopters encouraged more homeowners to sign up for a home energy assessment than having a public figure promote assessments during a public event
- Homeowners within a program's target audience are motivated to answer a call to action more often with a message about home comfort than one about saving money on energy bills.

## Share marketing and outreach impacts internally and with partners

Communicate marketing and outreach results to other program staff, as well as marketing partners, contractors, and stakeholders, on a regular basis. Not only will these groups be interested in learning about the impact of their contributions, but they can also help you make necessary adjustments to strategies that are not working. Partners and stakeholders value being heard, so sharing your results and asking their point of view enhances cooperation and trust.

### EnergyWorks Leaves Legacy by Sharing Lessons

Philadelphia's [EnergyWorks program](#) made a point of sharing information and lessons learned with local utility partners, including Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW). "By the end of the program, we had identified a successful formula of marketing, outreach, and contractor interface, and we wanted our lessons learned to be useful in the future," said Katherine Gajewski, director of sustainability for the City of Philadelphia.

PGW, a city-owned utility, was developing energy conservation programs closely resembling the design of the EnergyWorks program, so there were several opportunities to exchange relevant information with PGW. EnergyWorks was interested in getting as much uptake as possible with the residential loan fund it established with the Pennsylvania Treasury Department, and PGW wanted to support homeowners who needed to finance improvements beyond rebates and incentives. By partnering with EnergyWorks, PGW enabled homeowners to access low-interest loan rates. EnergyWorks got access to a larger pool of loan applicants, and PGW was able to utilize an existing loan product that was already very attractive and supported by Better Buildings Neighborhood Program seed funding.

By sharing data, program experiences, and what worked (and what did not work) to encourage program participation, EnergyWorks helped to sustain PGW's energy upgrade efforts into the future.

Source: [In the City of Brotherly Love, Sharing Know-How Leads to Sustainability](#), U.S. Department of Energy, 2013.

You can share marketing and outreach successes and lessons learned in a variety of ways:

- Develop case studies and fact sheets.
  - When developing stories, be sure to include a narrative—with a protagonist (e.g., the program administrator, a homeowner, a contractor), a problem to be overcome, barriers faced along the way, and a resolution.

- Stories highlighting marketing and outreach successes, particularly those that include customer testimonials, can be developed and shared with online outlets, trade publications, and local newspapers.
- Highlight improvements on your program's website by letting customers know when their feedback has been put into action (e.g., We heard you! Our program has made it easier for you to sign up for a home energy assessment).
- Present at conferences, which can also be a good place to get new ideas and learn from others.
- Contribute to the Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center.
- Join the [Better Buildings Residential Network](#). Residential Network members regularly benefit from sharing marketing and outreach best practices.

Coordinate case studies, stories, lessons learned, and best practices that highlight your marketing and outreach successes with the person or team responsible for communicating your [program's overall results](#).

Get more information on which communication channels you could use to share marketing and outreach impacts in the [Program Design Communicate Impacts handbook](#).

Lessons learned from your marketing efforts can be shared beyond the program's partners and stakeholders. [Contributing results and materials to the Better Buildings Residential Program Solution Center](#) provides recognition for your program, and benefits residential energy efficiency programs across the country that can learn what has—or has not—worked for you, and vice-versa.

#### Examples of Communicating Marketing and Outreach Impacts

Here are just a few ways the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners have communicated marketing and outreach impacts.

- DOE created several **case studies** highlighting Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners' marketing and outreach successes and lessons learned. Visit this handbook's [Examples tab](#) to read these case studies.
- Many local and national **conferences** have residential energy efficiency components, including events organized by [Affordable Comfort, Inc.](#) (ACI), the [American Council for Energy-Efficient Economy](#) (ACEEE), and the [Alliance to Save Energy](#) (ASE). See the Program Presentations and Reports section of the [Examples tab](#) for just a few examples of Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners sharing their successes and lessons learned.
- Many Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners developed their own **newsletters** to share successes, lessons learned, and opportunities for participation with partners and other stakeholders. The [Better Buildings Network View e-newsletter](#) regularly features marketing and outreach successes from Better Buildings Neighborhood Program partners and Better Buildings Residential Network members.
- The [RePower Bainbridge and RePower Bremerton programs](#) in Washington state developed an infographic summarizing the results of its Final Boarding Call event. **Infographics** are a good approach for sharing program results with partners and other stakeholders because they can do so in a brief, visually appealing way.

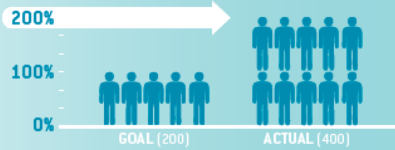
#### RePower Bainbridge and RePower Bremerton Infographic



## "FINAL BOARDING CALL" EVENT RESULTS

**FINAL BOARDING CALL:** A free one-day event featuring trade allies, lenders, utilities and community organizations in one location to help homeowners complete home energy upgrades.  
**GOAL:** Convert homeowners who received a FREE Home Energy Check-Up but have not yet made energy-efficiency improvements.

EVENT ATTENDEES:  
**200%  
ABOVE GOAL!**



**68%**  
OF ATTENDEES TOOK THE  
\$800 SPECIAL REBATE OFFER.

HOW MANY ATTENDEES  
USED THE REBATE OFFER?  
RESULTS IN JULY!



### SUCCESS STORY

One particular property owner benefited from the one-stop-shop opportunity – she pre-qualified for the Whole House Energy Upgrade package for each of her six rental properties, connected with trade allies to schedule work, and received loan information from Puget Sound Cooperative Credit Union. The customer left the event with a clearly defined route for upgrading all her rental properties.

*This story is just one example of how RePower's "Final Boarding Call" helped homeowners and our partners. By the end of this one-day event, Kitsap Credit Union and Puget Sound Cooperative Credit Union received approximately 30 leads, and Puget Sound Energy sold 123 lighting kits to 102 customers.*

### EXHIBITOR FEEDBACK

**Lena Price, Air Masters Heating**  
We had many more leads at the event than we would at a local home show event in a 6-hour period.

**Rich Perlot, Heat Holders**  
This was by far, the most productive event by a wide margin. The customer base was narrowly targeted, making every set of eyeballs a legitimate potential customer.

**Scott Park, Quality Heating**  
We received 30 leads/appointments from the event. We are extremely impressed with the focused group you were able to attract.

**Cathie Currie, Puget Sound Energy**  
We sold 123 lighting kits to 102 customers, putting a total of 1,794 energy-saving products in customers' hands. These should save our customers a total of \$160,558 over the life of the products, saving 993,055 pounds of carbon – the equivalent of taking 122 cars off of the road for a year!

### ATTENDEE DEMOGRAPHICS

**79%**  
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND



**19%**  
OFF ISLAND  
**2%**  
UNKNOWN

**GET  
\$800  
BACK  
PLUS  
OTHER  
REBATES**

Make  
Upgrades

Finance  
with Credit  
Unions

Connect  
with Trade  
Allies



- Press tour prior to the event (resulting in prominent coverage)
- \$800 special event offer for attendees only
- Free
- Letters sent to residents through the City of Bainbridge Island
- Targeted, integrated marketing campaign

SUCCESSFUL RESULTS

CLEAR PATH =

KEY INGREDIENTS +

Source: RePower Bainbridge and RePower Bremerton, 2013.

## Tips for Success

In recent years, hundreds of communities have been working to promote home energy upgrades through programs such as the Better Buildings Neighborhood Program, Home Performance with ENERGY STAR, utility-sponsored programs, and others. The following tips present the top lessons these programs want to share related to this handbook. This list is not exhaustive.

### Make upgrade benefits visible by showcasing completed projects and actual results

Unlike remodeling projects, home energy upgrade benefits are generally not immediately visible to the casual observer. Strategies that demonstrate tangible benefits from upgrades can help increase understanding and motivation with potential customers. To help energy efficiency become real, some programs successfully used house parties and demonstration homes to show potential customers what a home energy assessment or upgrade entails. In some cases, the hosts of these events were interested or satisfied customers who invited friends and neighbors, allowing the program to leverage word-of-mouth marketing from trusted sources. Program staff and a contractor were typically present to walk the attendees through a home energy assessment of the house or, when showing an upgraded home, point out the home performance measures that were installed.

#### California Puts Homes on Display



Source: California Center for Sustainable Energy

#### In Their Own Words: Engaging Neighbors Through Home Energy Showcases



Source: U.S. Department of Energy, 2012.

- During a one-year "house party" initiative, [Energy Impact Illinois](#) worked with trusted neighborhood champions to host more than 650 house parties, which enabled more than 3,000 Chicago homeowners, neighbors, and friends to see for themselves what energy efficiency upgrades can mean to a home. Each gathering included a real-time energy assessment demonstration on the homeowner's home, and the opportunity for attendees to sign up for their own assessment or upgrade. Program administrators estimated that more than 900 house party participants completed upgrades. Learn more in the [Focus Series interview with Energy Impact Illinois](#).

- The [California Center for Sustainable Energy](#), which manages a residential energy efficiency program in San Diego, partnered with municipalities to conduct [demonstration home tours](#), which successfully promoted both energy assessments and the contractors who performed them. During the tours, neighbors heard testimonials from demonstration homeowners, took a firsthand look at contractors' work, asked questions of the contractors who installed the upgrades, learned about available incentives, and had an opportunity to sign up for an energy assessment of their own home. Between January 28 (when the initiative formally launched) and April 21, 2012, about 25% of the home tour participants signed up for a home energy assessment with a contractor.
- [NOLA WISE](#) (New Orleans, Louisiana, Worthwhile Investments Save Energy) generated its highest number of high-quality leads through its Homeowner Showcases. NOLA WISE organized and promoted the open house events, which were hosted by homeowners who completed home energy upgrades. The NOLA Wise team and contractors were present to highlight the completed home energy upgrades and educate attendees on how to make their own homes more comfortable and energy efficient. The program saw an uptick in home energy assessment requests in neighborhoods where these events were held.

## Provide expertise and newsworthy stories to media outlets to garner earned media coverage

Many successful programs found that getting media attention for their offerings and benefits helped add credibility to marketing efforts and expand their reach. By positioning "green" stories or home improvement mini-segments on local television or radio stations, they provided timely content that generated interest in their programs' services (e.g., a story about how to cool homes in a heat wave).

Although television coverage or advertising may not always generate immediate leads, it can increase program recognition and lay the groundwork for future leads. Successful programs also tracked where customers heard about their program to understand which outlets were working (e.g., by including promotional codes on materials and asking for the code when potential customers call or visit the program's website).

- The media is often interested in stories about the first or the biggest, or about breaking thresholds. The [Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance](#) used its 1,000<sup>th</sup> upgrade milestone as the basis for a press conference, which garnered newspaper and television coverage for the program and its satisfied customers.
- Virginia's [Local Energy Alliance Program](#) (LEAP) earned media attention for its "house doctor," Guy Caroselli. As an expert on building science and energy efficiency, Mr. Caroselli hosted a weekly radio show, provided home improvement advice at events, and wrote a blog to address recurring issues for contractors and homeowners. Putting a voice with specific expertise in home improvement added a great deal of credibility and human interest to LEAP's outreach efforts.

### LEAP's House Doctor Is In



*Source: Local Energy Alliance Program*

LEAP's "House Doctor" creative approach to providing advice on home energy efficiency garnered media attention for the program.

- The [Solar and Energy Loan Fund](#) (SELF) in St. Lucie County, Florida, was able to capture media coverage by continuously refreshing its messages and maintaining a tone of "new-ness" to what the program was doing. SELF found that highlighting "first" experiences (e.g., its first Community Reinvestment Act loan, the county's first property assessed clean energy [PACE] program) was key to this approach. As these first experiences are hard to maintain over time, the organization also drew attention to milestones such as its 200th client or hitting a \$2 million dollar mark in its lending. Finally, SELF shifted from its own success to highlighting the success of others related to its efficiency program and sharing stories about its customers as well as its affiliated contractors. By stressing that SELF was the local community's nonprofit and that the successes achieved were not only for SELF but for the community as a whole, this engaged the local media over time.

## Good news is addictive – spread news about program accomplishments widely and often

Successful programs use many channels to communicate accomplishments and results to stakeholders. These include word of mouth and products such as press releases, announcements on websites, case studies, and presentations. Many programs use earned media—especially local media when possible—by giving people something to talk about, such as endorsements from local personalities.

- New Orleans' [NOLA WISE](#) program (Worthwhile Investments Save Energy) organized showcases hosted by homeowners. NOLA WISE promoted these showcases through neighborhood canvassing, electronic newsletters, social media, and collaboration with nearby neighborhood associations. The events often generated earned media coverage. NOLA WISE experienced an uptick in home energy assessment requests in neighborhoods where these events were held following the showcases.
- At the [Energize Bedford](#) launch event, Martha Stewart—one of Bedford's best-known citizens—was a prominent attendee and supporter. Reaching well beyond the immediate community, Martha Stewart [wrote about her experience](#) on her blog, further illuminating the important work of Energize Bedford. Locally well-known people can be effective program champions as well, such as a local weather person.
- The [Solar and Energy Loan Fund](#) in St. Lucie County, Florida actively attracted media coverage by continuously refreshing its message, maintaining a sense of new activity and innovation, and stressing its contribution to the community. The program emphasized "firsts" in its messaging—such as its first loan, its first experience with crowd funding, and launching the county's first PACE financing program. It emphasized key funding or participation milestones (e.g., \$2 million in loans issued). The program also highlighted the success of its partners and the satisfaction of clients, in addition to its own accomplishments. These activities kept the program continuously in the news.

## Examples

The following resources are examples from individual residential energy efficiency programs, which include case studies, program presentations and reports, and program materials. The U.S. Department of Energy does not endorse these materials.

### Case Studies

#### [Spotlight on Rutland County, Vermont: How Local Ties Lead to Local Wins](#) (552 KB)

Author: U.S. Department of Energy

Publication Date: 2011

Building on its understanding of homeowners in Rutland County, Vermont, NeighborWorks of Western Vermont (NWWVT) enlisted respected local citizens and organizations to spread the word about home energy efficiency upgrade opportunities, an effort that helped drive demand for nearly 200 home upgrades in just six months

#### [In the City of Brotherly Love, Sharing Know-How Leads to Sustainability](#)

Author: U.S. Department of Energy

Publication Date: 2013

Philadelphia EnergyWorks helped sustain future programs by sharing marketing insights and program data with a local utility partner.

#### [Spotlight on Austin, Texas: Best Offer Ever Produces Upgrades in Record Time](#) (555 KB)

Author: U.S. Department of Energy

Publication Date: 2011

With its Best Offer Ever promotion, Austin Energy completed comprehensive energy upgrades in a record 564 homes in only six months--more than 10 times the utility's typical participation rate. To quickly develop momentum for BetterBuildings-Austin Energy's Clean Energy Accelerator program with homeowners, Austin Energy leveraged its existing Home Performance with ENERGY STAR infrastructure, experience, and contractor base but added a comprehensive rebate/financing offer for a finite launch period. Demand soared, and due to thoughtful planning, Austin Energy and its contractors were able to keep up with requests for energy assessments, inspections, improvements, and loan origination, while learning valuable lessons along the way.

#### [Spotlight on Michigan: Sweeping the State for Ultimate Success](#) (500 KB)

Author: U.S. Department of Energy

Publication Date: 2011

This case study describes an innovative program design used by BetterBuildings for Michigan to "sweep" neighborhoods in order to effectively reach its residential audience and achieve an 80% participation rate among those canvassed.

#### [Spotlight on Seattle, Washington: Community Partnerships Work to Extend Program Reach](#) (5 MB)

Author: U.S. Department of Energy

Publication Date: 2011

This case study shares how Seattle's Community Power Works engaged a vast network of partners to build on existing capacity and knowledge, extending the reach of its program in a short period of time.

### Program Presentations & Reports

#### [EnergySmart Program Progress Review](#)

Author: Navigant, Inc. (Prepared for Boulder County)

Publication Date: 2012

This progress report provides community members and others interested in EnergySmart with a clear snapshot of its progress. The report also provides a timeline of energy efficiency policies and programs in Boulder County.

#### [Preliminary Energy Savings Impact Evaluation: Better Buildings Neighborhood Program](#)

Author: Research Into Action, Inc.

Publication Date: 2013

This document presents the findings from the preliminary impact evaluation of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Better Buildings Neighborhood Program (BBNP). The overall objective of the preliminary impact evaluation was to develop independent, quantitative estimates of BBNP's economic impacts and energy savings for projects completed from the onset of programmatic activities through 2012.

### **Seattle Community Power Works Fall 2012 Progress Report**

Author: Washington State University Energy Program

Publication Date: 2012

This mid-program evaluation includes extensive analysis of program sectors, including results of surveys of participants, and summarizes lessons learned to date.

### **Energy Pro3: Productivity, Progress and Prosperity for the Southeast**

Author: Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance

Publication Date: 2013

This report demonstrates the results achieved to date by the Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance. It highlights the experiences of Consortium programs, their successes driving further investments in energy efficiency improvements, and the challenges that hindered their progress. It also details the infrastructure, resources, and opportunities that support the deployment of energy efficiency programming, and the approaches that the Consortium has found best suited to the region.

### **Connecticut - Analyzing Outreach Effectiveness to Improve Program Design**

Author: Kerry O'Neill, Connecticut Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge

Publication Date: 2011

This presentation shares how the Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge collected and evaluated data and used the results to improve its program.

## **Program Materials**

### **RePower Bainbridge's Final Boarding Call Infographic**

Author: Conservation Services Group

Publication Date: 2013

This infographic summarizes the results of RePower Bainbridge's Final Boarding Call event, providing an effective, engaging way to share program results with partners and other stakeholders.

### **Web Series: A Tale of Two Bills**

Author: Energy Impact Illinois

Publication Date: 2011

These award winning videos show the benefits of residential energy efficiency.

### **Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance 2012 Green Business Award**

Author: Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance

Publication Date: 2012

This article promotes the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance's 2012 U.S. Green Building Council /Business Courier Green Business Award for Education/Outreach & Nonprofit. The award celebrated the program's outreach approach of reaching out to homeowners directly through community engagement and neighborhood canvassing.

## Toolbox

The following resources are available to help design, implement, and evaluate possible activities related to this handbook. These resources include templates and forms, as well as tools and calculators. The U.S. Department of Energy does not endorse these materials.

### Templates & Forms

None available at this time.

### Tools & Calculators

None available at this time.

## Topical Resources

The following resources provide additional topical information related to this handbook, which include presentations, publications, and webcasts. Visit [Examples](#) for materials from and about individual programs.

### Topical Presentations

None available at this time.

### Publications

None available at this time.

### Webcasts

#### **Tips and Tools for Promoting Your Energy Efficiency Project**

[Presentation](#), [Media](#) (53 MB), [Transcript](#)

Author: Jim Arwood, National Association of State Energy Officials; Nancy Raca, ICF International

Publication Date: 2010

This webcast provides information on why outreach is important for program success and how programs can promote their efforts.

#### **Communicating Success: Measuring Improvements, Sharing Results**

[Presentation](#), [Media](#), [Transcript](#)

Author: U.S. Department of Energy

Publication Date: 2011

This webcast teaches attendees how to leverage program results to promote energy efficiency campaigns.

